



Plant Chat

A Quarterly Publication from the Bismarck Plant Materials Center
to the NRCS Field Offices in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota

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<http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov>

What is Available for Plant Materials Testing?

Each State recently sent out a bulletin with information regarding availability of plant materials for testing next year. The deadline date is sometime before each States' Plant Materials Committee meeting in either December or January. If you are interested in obtaining plant materials for next year, please read the information carefully. Gray dogwood, Amur chokecherry, and slough sedge are being offered for field planting evaluation. Only six sites are needed in each State, so the committee may have to prioritize requests for field plantings if the demand exceeds the supply. Trees and shrubs are evaluated for five years and herbaceous plants for three years. If interested, you need to complete a PM-9 form and return it to your area plant materials representative. Small amounts of seed/plants may also be requested for demonstration, educational, and research purposes. A letter, e-mail, or PM-9 providing hardcopy background information for the request is desired. When ordering foundation seed for seed production, the cooperator can contact me directly and does not have to go through the field office. You will be notified if a cooperator in your county does obtain seed from the PMC for seed production purposes, but you no longer need to initiate any paperwork. We appreciate your interest in using the plant materials program and we place a high priority on each and every request we get from field offices. No other agency has the network of field offices in each county to test or demonstrate "applied conservation plant technology" directly from the development source (Plant Materials Center) to the landowner (Field Office). We recognize this uniqueness and the need to keep you informed on what's happening in plant materials.

Dwight Tober, Plant Materials Specialist

Merry Christmas!

Though the Bismarck PMC doesn't evaluate evergreens for Christmas trees, it is a big agroforestry related industry for some folks around the country. A great website that has lots of facts, traditions, and activities is from the University of Illinois Extension. Here are a few of these tree facts. Take a look if you get a chance. Its address is <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/trees/>

Christmas trees have been sold commercially in the

United States since about 1850. Until fairly recently, all Christmas trees came from the forest.

- Thirty-four to thirty-six million Christmas trees are produced each year and 95 percent are shipped or sold directly from Christmas tree farms. In North America, there are more than 15,000 Christmas tree growers.
- The best selling trees are Scotch pine, Douglas fir, Noble fir, Fraser fir, Virginia pine, Balsam fir, and white pine.
- Over one million acres of land have been planted in Christmas trees.
- More than 2,000 trees are usually planted per acre. On an average, 1,000 to 1,500 survive. In the north, 750 survive.
- This year, 73 million new Christmas trees will be planted.
- It takes 6 to 10 years to grow a mature Christmas tree.
- An acre of Christmas trees provides for the daily oxygen requirements of 18 people.

The top Christmas tree producing States are California, Oregon, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Washington, and Wisconsin. Oregon is the leading producer of Christmas trees with 8.6 million in 1998. Michigan grows the widest variety (13) of trees of any State. Christmas trees are grown in all 50 States including Hawaii and Alaska.

Nancy Jensen, Agronomist



Grass identification in the field is part of the PMC training held every year. Training in 2004 is tentatively scheduled for August 10-12.



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